Steger, South Chicago Heights Join South Suburban Airport Commission
Wednesday, 19 November 2003

The Villages of South Chicago Heights and Steger are the latest communities to join the South Suburban Airport Commission being led by U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr.

They bring to 30 the number of municipalities that have asked to join the Commission, which is seeking to build Chicago's third airport through an innovative public-private partnership. As proposed, the one-runway starter airport financed with private dollars would open in late 2008.

On Monday the Commission issued a worldwide request for proposals from qualified airport developers to design, finance, build and operate the airport. The commission hopes to have a short list of qualified developers by January 9th, 2004, and to award a contract to a master developer by March 31st, 2004, said Congressman Jackson.

The airport will oversee the planning, construction, development and operations of the proposed airport in conjunction with the private developers. The authority will also negotiate to buy or lease from the State of Illinois land which it has acquired for the project near University Park. The airport's first phase will create 1,000 construction jobs by 2005 and 15,000 new jobs by opening day in 2008, Jackson said.

Also, the Commission announced this week a December 17th deadline for communities to join. "By then, local communities would have had more than 90 days to decide. After that date, the Commission will begin reviewing proposals from developers and it would be inappropriate to add members after the selection process is under way," Jackson said.

The four communities join Park Forest, University Park, South Holland, Lynwood, Riverdale, Calumet Park, Chicago Heights, Markham, Ford Heights, Calumet City, Thornton, Midlothian, Richton Park, Homewood, Matteson, Phoenix, Country Club Hills, Olympia Fields, Glenwood, East Hazel Crest, Oak Forest, Sauk Village, Flossmoor, Lansing, Hazel Crest, Robbins, Elk Grove Village and Bensenville, all of whom previously adopted an agreement to participate in the Commission.